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ABSTRACT

Equity does not require that everyone have the same amount of resources to satisfy basic needs, but it does require that each of us be able to live decently. The articles in this issue focus on poverty and its effects on children, particularly with respect to education and the ability to learn. The following articles are included: (1) "Poor Kids Can Still Learn" (Percy Bates); (2) "Effective Education for Low-Income Students: An African-American Perspective" (Elizabeth M. Mimms); (3) "Unheard Voices: A National Origin Perspective on the Politics of Poverty" (Norma Barquet); (4) "Equity and Poverty: A Gender Equity Perspective" (Eleanor Linn); (5) "Who Are the Poor Children?" (Judith L. Greenbaum); (6) "Resilient Children" (Bob Croninger); (7) "The Checklist: How Does Your School Respond to Poverty?" (Judith L. Greenbaum); (8) "'It Takes a Whole Village To Educate a Child' (An African Proverb)" (Salome Gebre-Egziabher); (9) "Pieces of the Puzzle: Programs from Which We Can Learn" (Tasha Lebow); (10) "Changing Demographics of the Poor in America" (Norma Barquet); and (11) "Equal and Adequate Funding for Urban Schools" (Ted Wilson); (12) "Recommended Resources on Poverty and Schools" (annotated list of 25 resources). References follow the articles. (SLD)

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For Race, Gender, and National Origin

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Poverty and Schools

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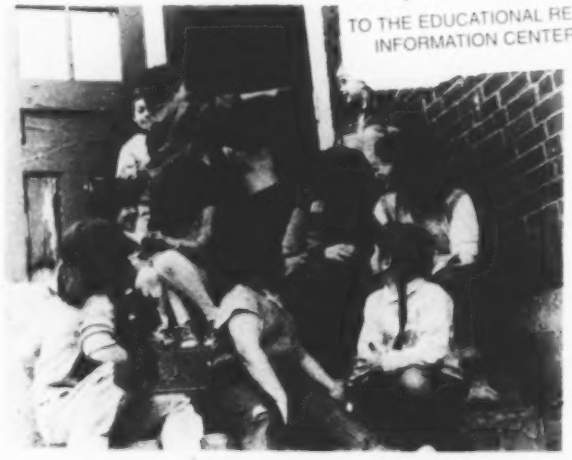
Poor Kids Can Still Learn

by Percy Bates, Ph.D., Director

MOST people acknowledge that we all have certain basic needs, for example food, clothing, and shelter. We don't need an abundance of any of these things, but we do need enough to ensure that we are not hungry, that we are warm, and that we are protected from the elements. While we all have these needs, we do not all have the same means for satisfying them. There are those among us with more resources than needed and there are those who have much less than needed, at times less than needed even to survive. While equity does not require that everyone have the same amount of resources to satisfy basic needs, it does require that each of us be able to live decently with self-respect, self-esteem, and dignity.

The poor live in a state of affairs in which many of these basic needs are unmet. Perhaps what is most alarming about this fact is that many of those who feel the effects of poverty are not adults but children. If one has never been poor, it is difficult to understand the effects of this condition on the ability of a child to learn and grow at the expected rate of other school-age children. Poverty has a way of dampening both the mind and the spirit. When a child is free from hunger, is warm, and feels a sense of being cared for within his or her environment, a good situation for learning takes place. All too often, however, this is not the case for children in poverty.



Marilyn Nolt, Souderton, PA

In this issue Judith Greenbaum points out that one out of every five children live in poverty. Norma Barquet notes even higher rates of poverty for specific populations of children. Among African-American, Hispanic, and American-Indian children the rate approaches one out of every two children. Other sources suggest that among the children of unmarried teenagers the proportion who live in poverty is even higher, perhaps as high as 80 percent. By most accounts the proportion of children who live in poverty is growing annually. So, too, I might add, are the educational challenges that accompany the poor when they enter school.

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Poor Kids Can Still Learn

Continued from page 1

We can, and often do, become overwhelmed by these facts, in part because we have very limited resources to address them. Poor children, for example, are more likely than other children to face a wide range of stressful life situations, including being victims of crime and discrimination, having parents who are chronically unemployed, or living in disrupted families. Unfortunately, many of these children also attend some of the poorest schools in their states. As Ted Wilson argues, a fairer distribution of the resources that school people can bring to bear on the problems that poor children and their teachers face daily could make a difference. That is why advocates for the poor have turned to the courts and to state legislatures to argue for more equitable school finance formulas.

The Children's Defense Fund recently estimated that the price tag for raising all family incomes above the poverty line would be 5.3 billion dollars. That's far less than estimates of the price tag for the Gulf War. Nonetheless, we need not wait for the country to find the political will to ensure that the basic needs of all children are met. There is much that we can and should do now to help poor kids succeed in school. If nothing else, we can increase our own awareness of what it means to be poor, explore our educational expectations for poor children, and commit ourselves to working with others to support their growth, nurture their sense of competency, and provide for their personal well-being. Dismay over conditions outside of the schools should not lead us to neglect ways in which we can affect the conditions within them. Nor should we underestimate, as Bob Croninger argues in this issue, the resiliency of poor children and their families.

The articles by Norma Barquet, Eleanor Linn, and Elizabeth Mimms expand our understanding of poverty, particularly as they pertain to national origin minorities, women, and African Americans. Barquet urges us to consider the ethnic diversity of the poor and to provide for the involvement of national origin groups in determining policies and practices that directly affect them. Linn describes some of the unique barriers that poor girls face, the ways in which schools may contribute to those barriers, and some of the strategies that girls use to overcome or circumvent them. Like Barquet, she reminds us that the poor are a diverse group of children and that we need to understand not only how they differ from

other children but how they differ from each other. Mimms urges us to consider our expectations for and commitment to the education of children in poverty, particularly African-American children. She uses the works of Ron Edmonds and James Comer to demonstrate that these children can learn and the schools they attend can be effective.

The articles by Salome Gebre-Egziabher and Tasha Lebow provide examples of what schools can and are doing to address the needs of poor children. Gebre-Egziabher describes guidelines for schools to consider when developing educational policies and practices. She also gives some examples of how schools have used similar guidelines to redefine services and develop new ways of supporting the growth and educational aspirations of children who live in poverty. Lebow examines some of the innovative ways in which schools have worked with others to address the needs of poor children. She shows how schools and communities can work together to provide services to poor children and their families within the context of the school. Neither article suggests that the schools, by themselves, can eliminate poverty or be a panacea for all the problems that poor children face in this country. They do, however, describe some things that can and are being be done to help them.

Poverty and its effects represent an important problem in our schools and in our society, one far too complicated to cover in a single issue of *Equity Coalition*. We have not tried, therefore, to address all of the effects of poverty on schooling, but rather to develop a context in which to explore those issues and develop new strategies. The checklist written by Judith Greenbaum provides an avenue for exploring additional aspects of poverty, particularly as they relate to school policies and practices. The bibliography at the end of this issue suggests others. Finally, you may find previous issues of the newsletter helpful in considering the effects of poverty on school children as well.

We hope this issue of *Equity Coalition* will help you work more effectively with children in poverty. School-age children may not immediately be able to escape their family's poverty, but they can still find school a warm and rich place in which to be, grow, and learn. We cannot influence every aspect of a child's life, but we can seek to influence those aspects of a child's life that we directly touch. The first step, as Ron Edmonds might have said, is to ask ourselves if we truly believe that poor kids can still learn. The articles that follow will challenge, and I hope bolster, your belief that indeed they can. ❖

Effective Education for Low-Income Students:

An African-American Perspective

by Elizabeth M. Mimms, Ph.D., Field Services Specialist

PUBLIC schools can effectively educate low-income, African-American students. Some schools are already doing so. Research and practice prove that the skills, knowledge, and other resources already exist to turn ineffective schools into effective schools. In fact, the search for effective public education for low-income, African-American students discovered examples of effective education for all students. The questions and answers below affirm this fact and show that when the promise of equity and excellence in education is matched with the political will to fulfill that promise, this part of the American dream can indeed become a reality.

Can public schools effectively educate low-income, African-American students? Yes! Dr. Ronald Edmonds found a small number of inner-city elementary schools that were doing so (Edmonds, 1979). As a central office executive for New York City Public Schools and a faculty member, first at Harvard University and then at Michigan State University, Edmonds was concerned about national and local standardized tests scores and other measures of school success that showed African-American students scoring lower than European-American students, and low-income, African-American students scoring lower than middle- and upper-income, African-American students.

He was concerned that low-income students, particularly low-income, African-American students, were often underachieving students. However, he did not believe that a student's socio-economic status or family background, in and of itself, actually caused school success or failure.

In his research, Edmonds located public elementary schools that were effectively educating low-income, minority students and then studied how those schools differed from public elementary schools that were ineffectively educating the same type of students. He defined effective schools as those that educated low-income students at least as well as they educated middle-income students (1979). For example, in an effective school, if 50 percent of the middle-income students achieved at or above the national norm on a standardized test of reading or math, then, 50 percent of the low-income students would also achieve at or above the national norm on those tests. Admittedly a modest criteria, this standard still far exceeds the level of achievement for low-income students at most schools across the nation where they tend to trail two academic years behind their same age classmates from middle- and upper-income families and to drop out in alarming numbers (Comer, 1988, p. 42).

> We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us.
>
> Ron Edmonds

Today Edmonds is highly regarded for his successful challenge to the widely held belief that schools cannot make a difference in the educational success of low-income or minority students. His research documents the fact that there are schools effectively educating poor, African-American students. He showed that schools already know all that they need to know to educate these children. He also showed that it is not the characteristics of the child that make the critical difference in whether or not children learn, since effective schools are serving the same population as ineffective schools. Instead it is the characteristics of the school that make the difference.

Can ineffective schools be turned into effective schools for low-income, African-American students? Yes! Dr. James Comer did (1988). Comer is a nationally recognized professor of psychiatry at Yale University Child Development Center. He focused on changing ineffective schools into effective schools. Beginning in 1968, Comer directed a research project over a twelve-year period that resulted in positive changes for two inner-city elementary schools in New Haven, Connecticut. In these schools 98 percent or more of the students were African American and over 70 percent were from families receiving public welfare. Both schools had a history of problems with achievement, attendance, and discipline, a 25 percent staff turnover rate, and poor parent-staff relations. By 1975 the success of the schools began to be evident. A 1980 finding showed the two schools were achieving above the national average in academic performance, had a significant reduction in truancy and disciplinary problems, and had 92 percent of the parents visiting their child's school 10 or more times a year.

How do schools successfully educate low-income, African-American students, according to Comer and Edmonds? Creating successful schools with the Comer project involves "building supportive bonds that draw together children, parents, and school," bonds that promote child development and learning (Comer, 1988, p. 42). These bonds are made possible through three key ingredients: a school governance team composed of the principal and elected parents, teachers, mental health specialists, and nonprofessional support staff; parents supporting and attending school programs and activities; and a mental health team that involves the school social worker, psychologist, and special education teacher working together.

The focus of these three components is to reduce the barriers between home and school by building up relationships of trust and respect within the school and between the school and community. The end result is schools that are sensitive to and supportive of the teaching and learning going on at home, and homes that are sensitive to and supportive of the teaching and learning going on at school.

The effective schools that Edmonds studied were different from ineffective schools in a number of important ways. Some of the characteristics associated with effective schools are the following: (1) strong instructional leadership (for example, from the principal, a master teacher, or staff team); (2) an agreed upon set of goals and expectations related to student achievement; (3) high expectations for student achievement demonstrated by instructional staff and other adults in the school community; (4) expectations that all students will achieve minimum

mastery regardless of race or socio-economic class; (5) maximum teacher time devoted to the teaching task; (6) a school social and physical climate conducive to learning; (7) frequent monitoring of student progress; and (8) use of student performance on standardized test as the impetus for trying more effective teaching strategies (Edmonds, 1979; Edmonds, 1986).

In addition, Edmonds noted, "Such success occurs partly because these [effective] schools are determined to serve all of their pupils without regard to family background. At the same time, these schools recognize the need to modify curricular design, text selection, teaching strategy, and so on, in response to differences in family background among pupils in the school" (1979, p. 22).

Is Edmonds the only researcher who documented the existence and characteristics of effective schools for low-income, African-American students, and is Comer the only scientist who has reported the creation of effective schools for low-income, African-American students? Comer and Edmonds, by striving for what works in predominantly low-income, African-American schools, have set an example for schools serving other types of students as well. The solutions they found work for all children. The Comer model has been replicated in some 100 elementary and secondary schools around the country. Edmonds's findings and subsequent work by other researchers sparked the current "school improvement movement" in which many state and district offices have been set up to help schools emulate the key characteristics found in schools that are effectively educating low-income, minority students. However, Edmonds and Comer are only two of many social scientists, educators, and others who have documented that schools can teach low-income, minority students successfully and that the know-how exists to do so (Carter and Chatfield, 1986; National Committee for Citizens in Education, 1980; Sizemore, 1985; Stedman, 1985).

Urban Network, courtesy of Sharon E. Sutton

If effective schools have been found, if effective schools can be created, and if educators know all they need to know to effectively educate low-income, African-American students, then why don't all schools successfully educate these students? Edmonds (1979, p. 23) answered this question very succinctly when he stated:

> (a) We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us; (b) we already know more than we need to do that; and (c) whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far.

Whether or not we educate poor, African-American children as well as we educate middle- and upper-income children of any race, seems to be a matter of collective and, sometimes, individual choice and interest. An example of collective lack of interest in educating all students effectively is found in recent research that examined equity in the use of effective curriculum and instruction at the middle-school level (Mac Iver and Epstein, 1990). The research, conducted by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students, compared the offerings of schools that served mainly low-income, low-achieving students (what they called "disadvantaged schools") with schools that served mainly high-achieving students and students from middle-income families (what they called "advantaged schools"). They found that the disadvantaged middle schools were just as likely as the advantaged middle schools to provide five specific curriculum and instructional strategies known to be effective for the achievement of all middle-school students: cooperative learning; mixed-grade grouping of students; interdisciplinary teaching teams; group advisory periods; and independent projects for students.

However, the advantaged schools were more likely than the disadvantaged schools to provide eight additional curriculum and instruction strategies also known to be effective for the achievement of all middle-school students: extensive remedial programs; advanced courses; hands-on learning and other active learning methods; higher order instructional methods; a full range of exploratory courses and mini-courses in art, computers, foreign languages, and other enriched electives; a broad range of extracurricular activities; training and guidance for teach-

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ers in adolescent development and strategies to successfully teach middle-school children; and parent involvement programming that includes recruitment and training of parent volunteers, frequent communication with parents, and an active PTA.

The point here is that students from advantaged backgrounds had the most comprehensive set of educational offerings at their schools, while students from disadvantaged backgrounds had the least comprehensive educational offerings available at their schools. So it appears that students with the most needs are getting the least amount of educational services and those with the least needs are getting the most amount of educational services. This imbalance in educational offerings serves only to guarantee differences in educational outcomes.

What must we do to see that all public schools effectively educate low-income, African-American students? Below are some suggestions policy makers, educators, concerned parents, and others can consider as they ponder this question:

- Enact state teacher certification requirements that require schools of education to train potential teachers and administrators to educate low-income, African-American students more effectively;
- Institute district employment policies that require new and existing instructional staff to demonstrate skills in effectively educating low-income, African-American students;
- Compare the academic achievement of low-income and middle-income students in your school, district, and state;
- Identify teachers in your building and schools in your district or state that are effectively educating low-income, African-American students;
- Recognize and learn from the successes of these effective district teachers and schools;
- Contract with consultants such as Dr. James Comer to design a long range plan for turning all district schools into effective schools;
- Actively involve professional organizations that serve African Americans (for example, the NAACP, Urban League, and African-American fraternities and sororities) in helping to locate and implement additional methods that have been effective in educating low-income, African-American students;
- Recruit and train parents to be advocates for the effective education of low-income, African-American students (for example, encourage them to form a support group for African-American students);
- Involve parents and interested others in studying and resolving issues related to the schooling of African-American students;
- Lastly, encourage low-income minority parents to organize to influence the selection of state and district level school board members, superintendents, and other school officials who demonstrate commitment to the effective education of low-income and minority children, including African-American children. For according to Edmonds, "If you genuinely seek the means to educational equity for all people, you must encourage parents' attention to politics as the greatest instrument of instructional reform extant" (1979, p. 16). ❖

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Unheard Voices:

A National Origin Perspective on the Politics of Poverty

by Norma Barquet, Associate Director for National Origin Equity

POOR families and their children, regardless of their color, culture, or language can no longer be made to wait for their turn as we distribute the resources in our society. Neither can they continue to be excluded from meaningful participation in decisions that will ultimately affect them. The politics that stand in the way of progress for national origin groups in our society is an urgent issue that we must address.

The federal government defines national origin people as those groups who have been discriminated against because of their country of origin. As with other labels used to categorize people, however, this definition poses problems when we begin to decide who is included and who is not. American Indians, for example, are considered a national origin group even though they lived on this continent centuries before Europeans arrived.

But regardless of what definition we use or whom we choose to include or exclude from this category, there are some political issues that have hindered the upward mobility of some of these federally recognized minorities and which therefore need to be addressed.

When we speak of national origin groups, three issues seem to surface. One is their language, which is usually one other than English, the second is their culture, which is usually not European, and the third criteria is their history of being discriminated against as a group in this country. Current trends in the demographics of the poor and the present socio-political status of some of these groups makes the discussion of these topics necessary, if not critical.

I will limit my examples to federally recognized minority groups in this country who also fall under the national origin category, i.e., American Indians, Hispanics, and Asians, in discussing the political issues that have hindered the education and upward mobility of national origin people. I will also focus on how these issues have manifested themselves in the Midwest though I will also offer examples from other regions to make my point. Furthermore, it should be noted that some of the arguments that I make also apply to other disadvantaged groups in our society.

Most of us would agree that regardless of the number of generations that have lived in this country, some national origin groups are still not seen as part of mainstream America. In fact, American Indians and Mexican Americans, who can trace their roots in this country to a time before the European colonization, continue to be perceived as "immigrants" or "foreigners" by many.

Ironically, when people in positions of power sit down to discuss equity issues pertaining to minorities, many of these same groups are not invited to participate in the discussions. Their issues are either not dealt with or others who are not from the groups are asked to speak on their behalf. Generally speaking, national origin people are either not recognized by the power structures as being in need of services or they are perceived as not capable of articulating their own needs. In the Midwest, this is due in great part to the low socio-economic and political status of some of these groups, making them either invisible or non-threatening to those in positions of power.

Issues associated with oppression such as slavery and segregation are easily identified with the negative experiences of African Americans and therefore have been a part of the equity dialogue in this country since before the Civil War. These issues also gained prominence in the mind of the American public during the civil rights movement of the sixties and seventies. And, while progress has been slow and at times even questionable, there is an acceptance in the minds of many that the issues of equity for African Americans must be resolved or

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at least acknowledged and addressed.

African Americans in the Midwest are also more visible because of their numbers. Their visibility is also due to the political clout that comes with those numbers and with their leadership in most of the major national efforts to bring about civil rights in this country. As a result, they have been somewhat successful in getting the attention of some sectors of the establishment and have made some progress in addressing the political issues that have hindered their education and upward mobility.

The same does not hold true for national origin people. The limited scope of the "equity consciousness" of this country, particularly in the Midwest, poses significant problems for some national origin groups. Their voices are largely unheard by the power structures and the American public.

This is in part because mainstream America doesn't identify in the same manner with the historical oppression of American Indians, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Asians in this country. These groups become entangled in struggles with those in positions of power around issues of priority and numbers because attempts to deal with discrimination are often not inclusive in their approach. Who is more needy? Which group has more numbers? Who should have the power to decide?

Hispanics, for instance, are often described as an invisible group. As with other national origin groups this invisibility is often attributed to cultural characteristics, life styles, lack of proficiency in English, and/or inexperience in dealing with bureaucracies. Either their low numbers or their lack of "real" need are often cited as reasons for not including them. American Indians, for instance, are often considered to be too few to "really matter," while Asians are all lumped together and stereotyped as "the model minority" and therefore not in need of special treatment or even recognition.

As a result, national origin people are far too often excluded from policy decisions that affect their lives. Desegregation and affirmative action, for instance, have not been historically perceived by the courts, the schools, or the American public as having a direct impact on national origin minorities. In many desegregation cases the courts have denied the request of Hispanics, American Indians, and other language minority groups to be included in lawsuits, even though their groups are ultimately affected by the decisions which are made and the subsequent remedies which are implemented.

Affirmative action programs, instituted in the sixties and the seventies to remedy discrimination in government, school districts, and other public and private sectors, have primarily targeted African Americans. Hispanics, Asians, and American Indians are often included only as a symbolic gesture, and only after much effort from those groups. As a result, affirmative action has had very little impact on the socio-economic mobility of these groups.

National origin people are, for the most part, tracked into positions dealing with issues of minorities. In the field of education, for instance, they are found almost exclusively in the area of bilingual education. Seldom are they found in administrative positions that affect the mainstream, such as superintendents of school districts, curriculum or personnel directors, and other positions of power. Neither are they included in the programs, opportunities, and networks that serve to prepare and promote professional people for higher level positions.

Bilingual education, the most significant educational issue for national origin people, is often not given the status or support that other programs receive in schools and districts. Instead, these programs are either tolerated or isolated from the mainstream of education for a variety of reasons. Those in positions of power either do not agree with its philosophy; or they lack understanding of what it is, and what it is supposed to accomplish; or they just plain resent it. Bilingual education is often treated as an unnecessary "perk" that other groups did not receive when they came to this country.

Even if we acknowledge the controversy that exists regarding the educational benefits of bilingual instruction, there seems to be a double standard regarding the learning of a second language. In suburban schools, for instance, learning a second or third language is greatly valued. Unfortunately, for poor language-minority students being able to maintain the language that links them to their families, heritage, and culture, is perceived as a detriment. These perceptions are neither educationally based nor pedagogically motivated. Instead they reflect an inequitable value system based on social class. What is good for the rich is not necessarily good for the poor.

Present efforts to restructure and reform schools, prompted by the failure of schools to educate poor and minority students, often do not address educational issues affecting Hispanics, American Indians, Southeast Asians, and other disadvantaged national origin minorities. As in other areas of our society the "one size fits all" mentality of dealing with issues of equity is equally prevalent in education. Programs that are designed for one group are expected to meet the needs of all other groups

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regardless of the specific needs of the students or of the situation. An example is the most recent national emphasis and funding of pre-school programs meant to target at-risk students. These wonderful opportunities might not be accessible or even beneficial to language minority students if the issue of language is not taken into consideration.

Aside from the need to do what is fair and just, the rationale for directly involving national origin people, their issues, and perspectives into any equity agenda is evident. Hispanics and Asians are increasingly becoming a significant social and economic reality in this country by virtue of their numbers and their increasing economic power. Large pockets of Southeast Asians, Hispanics, and other national origin groups, many of whom are poor and undereducated, exist in almost every major urban area, including cities in the Midwest. Also, American Indians, regardless of their numbers (which are low due to the genocide and forced relocation to reservations), must be recognized and included in decisions about issues affecting them and the future of this country in general.

National origin people cannot continue to be excluded from real participation in substantive efforts to improve critical areas that affect their lives such as education, housing, health, and employment. Because their groups are greatly affected by poverty, and they are disproportionately represented in the dropout population, they must be included in any and all of the decision making processes that will ultimately affect them.

Any perspective on the issue of poverty and its impact on national origin people must address their gross underrepresentation at every level and in every area of the decision making processes in our society. Whether it is in the area of education, housing, health, or employment, national origin people must have access to positions of power to be able to effect real change for their groups and society in general. Hopefully, then, the issues, concerns, and perspectives of these groups will be included as an integral part of the structures, programs, and services that will impact them.

To deal effectively with socio-economic and educational issues affecting the poor we must first:

1. Take into consideration that poor people are not a homogeneous group—that they represent every race, gender, culture, age, and religious group in our society, and that inclusive strategies that address these variables, can make critical differences in successful programming.

2. Establish holistic remedies for discrimination dealing with gender, race, and national origin. While sometimes different, these equity areas of concern must be seen as integral and equal parts of any plan to create a better and more equitable society. Without such an inclusive philosophy we will only continue to recreate the same conditions of oppression that permeate the history of this country and of the world.

3. Involve and listen to the perspectives of those who are affected by our decisions if our goal is to create a more inclusive and equitable society. Their participation as equal partners is paramount to any successful intervention.

4. Create coalitions of interest across racial/ethnic lines to increase our political power and our ability (both singular and collective) to bring about change for those who are less advantaged regardless of their race, ethnicity, or gender.

Once and for all, we must come to terms with the realization that in order to deal effectively with the issue of poverty or any other form of institutionalized oppression, we must bring to the table all of those who are affected by it. Not only is this the right and just thing to do, but it also makes sense in a very practical way. It is through meaningful participation and a sense of ownership on the part of those most affected that we increase the chances of success of any intervention.

True leadership will ultimately be measured by our ability to remove the real barriers to education and upward mobility for all groups within our social structures and by our resolve to protect the inherent right of all people to self-determination. ❖

Equity and Poverty:

A Gender Equity Perspective

> Before she became self-supporting, she had never imagined that one tends to do major economic calculations over and over again in one's head, as if the figures might improve with repetition.
>
> Carol Bly, "The Last of the Gold Star Mothers," p. 17.

> [Momma] lived in poverty so grindin'. Not the kind that keeps ya one food stamp from hustlin' on the street, but poverty that sucks. And you die inch by inch, day by day. Momma had left the fight a long time ago. Now when she woke each day, her eyes would pop open, like my very white doll with blue eyes. Someone would pull the ring at her neck and she'd say "My name is Annie. See Dick and Jane. These are my children..."
>
> Cherry Muhanji, "Jumpin' to Success," p. 83.

by Eleanor Linn, Associate Director for Gender Equity

SOMETIMES fiction teaches us more than social science about the reality that exists for other people. Carol Bly's semi-autobiographical protagonist Mary Garving is anxious and stressed by the economic hardships that affect her life. Like many mothers she struggles alone to raise her children with very little or no money. She tries to take care of them, to be a respectable member of society, and to be cheerful, but it isn't easy. Mary Garving, and women like her, are hard pressed, yet they struggle against the odds to raise their children as best they can.

Momma (Annie Washington) is a biographically-based fictional character in a group novel about African-American women in Detroit. She has been poor for a long time and everyone around her is poor. Annie Washington is burdened with the multiple effects of low status based on her gender, race, class, and inner-city residence. She is over stressed and under supported in an unending struggle, yet she is enormously loved by her children.

Social science compacts these experiences into statistics and tables that highlight how these families are different from middle-class families. These statistical comparisons suggest that the problems of poor children in school are the result of deficits within their homes. But Mary Garving, Annie Washington, and mothers like them do their best under difficult circumstances. Often they provide their children with enormous love and affection, even when they cannot provide for some of their material needs. As the daughter of Annie Washington says, "Without touch and feelin' from Momma,' my own life went dark. I felt lost, left alone, search'n for a seat on the bus, with momma the only other passenger on it."

Wages

The families described in these two works of literature and thousands of real families are punished by the consequences of a racist and sexist system of wages and segregated occupations. As labor historian Alice Kessler-Harris explains in her recent book, *A Woman's Wage: Historical Meanings and Social Consequences*, the ideal of a male-headed family demanded that white men be paid enough to support their wives and children, while women were paid less than enough to support themselves. This discriminatory wage structure remains in place today, even though more and more women provide the sole support for their families. The majority of working women earn wages that are simply too low to maintain a family above the poverty level. Then, after a day of low-paid work, these women come home to a second shift of domestic chores besides.

> **Why not teach about poverty and affluence, oppression and privilege, ascribed gender roles and discrimination in ways that are meaningful to students?**

Schools benefit from the gender disparities in the wage system in our country. They have done so in the past and they continue to do so today. The teaching profession expanded in the nineteenth century on the acclaimed economies of hiring women instead of men at less than a living wage. Today cafeteria workers and school aides (mostly women) are paid below poverty level

wages or hired in part-time arrangements that keep their incomes exceedingly low.

Likewise, schools save money and preserve the economic status quo when they assume that all children have access to the unpaid labor of a stay-at-home mother who provides preschool education for her children, reads stories, serves snacks after school, plans summer outings, and helps with homework. The lack or poor quality of these childcare related services in many communities and their prohibitive cost adds to the stress on mothers in poverty and contributes to the educational inequities faced by children from poor working families. Affordable and accessible before- and after-school care, summer programs, preschool programs, and homework clinics are obvious ways that schools can reduce these institutionalized forms of inequity.

Housework vs. Homework

Many mothers need to work. Consequently, many household chores that are performed by adult women or are purchased from others in middle- and upper-class families become the responsibility of children in poor families, and particularly of girls. Poor girls often miss school to care for younger siblings and sick relatives; they run errands and perform a host of other family tasks that must be done during the day. Poor girls may be needed to provide household labor at night, and then they are too tired during the school day to pay close attention to their school work. Beside the basics, girls' labor may be used to provide luxuries and pleasures that can not otherwise be bought by poor families: hair-dressing, cooking for special occasions, or mending clothes. Educators may interpret these activities as indications of the girls lack of concern for school. Schools rarely make provision for time off or modified schedules, so these responsibilities are often the cause of poor girls' dropping out of school.

Don't Blame Mothers

From a more severe perspective, women like Mary Garving and Annie Washington have frequently been blamed for causing the acting out behavior of poor adolescent boys. This argument has been thrown most aggressively at African-American women, but mothers from other racial and ethnic groups have not been immune. Research about sex role acquisition shows it simply not to be true. Children of both sexes imitate models of dominance and nurturing from the examples around them, and not necessarily from the parent of the same sex (Powell, 1983). Poor children of both sexes may have viable models in extended family and kinship networks. Different cultures have many ways to raise successful children of both sexes.

Recent alarm at the high rate of homicide, incarceration, drug abuse, and school failure of African-American young men (Gibbs, 1988) reflects a situation that is without question deplorable, but it is not the fault of the boys' mothers. It comes from economic causes, racism, and sexism. Nearly a century of ethnographic studies about poor and working-class boys from numerous cultural groups (both with and without fathers in the home) have observed similar types of poor and working-class adolescent male behavior: competition, high risk-taking, a desire for power and physical domination over young women, and visible displays of thwarting the authority of older men. See Willis (1977), for example.

The current surge of crack, guns, and unsafe sex has lethal consequences for these young people. This violence is brought on most probably by the conflict that working class and poor boys experience between the pressure to be good providers and the unlikelihood of their ever being able to do so. In part, these poor boys' subcultures teach them to take on traditional male roles (domination of women, competition with other men); in part they provide them with a temporary way of rejecting or resisting the low status roles that they will probably have to take on in adulthood. Contrary to calls for ever larger doses of sex-stereotyped, male-dominated activities for such boys, gender research has clearly shown that we can diminish boys' acting out behavior by providing them with successful male *and* female role models and a broader range of gender roles and expectations.

from My Mother and I Are Growing Strong, New Seed Press, Berkeley, CA

Girls from poor and working-class families are also at high risk. Their subcultures place enormous value on physical appearance, ability to attract men, and ambivalent friendship/competitive relationships with each other (McRobbie, 1978). As with the boys mentioned above, these subcultures probably teach girls to take on traditional female roles (obedient wife, sex object, friendship/kinship member) while also providing them with a means of resisting the often dreary role of a poor adult woman through the temporary rewards of glamour and consumerism. Working class and poor girls' loud talk about boyfriends and sex, and excessive use of make-up, and nail polishing in class can be seen as a way of rejecting the middle-class values that dominate schooling. In generations gone by, such rejection had its severest consequences in unintended pregnancy and hasty marriage. Today early sexual experience, drinking, and drug abuse may lead to single motherhood, addiction, AIDS, and lives spent in poverty.

Educators' Reactions

Teenagers' rejection of adults and their expectations are not one-sided, however. Adults are the receivers of and reactors to teenagers' behavior. Although any adult may become irritated by adolescents acting out, educators are especially likely to be provoked, and not only because they spend long hours in physical and emotional proximity to young people. As educators our own unresolved gender and class issues may cause us to overreact to our students' behavior.

Educators who come from working-class or poor backgrounds often go into teaching as a means of social advancement into the middle class. They often succeeded because they liked learning and were willing to accept the social norms that prevail in school. These educators usually have middle-class aspirations for their own children and for their students. When students reject the social norms of school, these educators may feel personally rejected.

Gender issues may compound their irritation. Men from poor and working-class origins may particularly feel ambivalent about working in a female-identified occupation, especially if the school emphasizes behavior that they consider unmasculine. They may partially identify with their students' rejection of these school norms, and hence experience personal conflict. These male educators can serve as strong and nurturing allies for rebellious students, if they understand these internal conflicts and if the school is willing to change its social norms to accommodate them as positive role models. But if

Marilyn Nolt, Souderton, PA

these conflicts of class and gender remain unresolved, this group of male educators may remain angry at school and blame the students who need them most.

Educators who come from middle- and upper-class backgrounds may not be aware of the class and cultural differences that working-class and poor children face in school, and they may attribute students' behavior to lack of intelligence, motivation, or self-control. For women, in particular, these conflicts may evoke anger about career limitations that have been placed on them, and a realization that controlling the poor is a price they are required to pay for earning a middle-class wage. If these women educators understand their internal conflicts and respond by opposing gender stereotypes and oppression, they may serve as excellent role models for poor and lower-class girls who want to explore non-traditional rôles and career opportunities. But if these conflicts cause them unresolved personal turmoil, they, like their working-class male counterparts, may feel angry and blame the students.

Changing School Culture

Not all poor and working class students reject school culture in angry ways. As Beth Goldstein (1988) and Kathryn Bormon and her colleagues (1988) show in studies of Hmong and Urban Appalachian girls respectively, many students from poor families reject school culture by withdrawing from it. "School wasn't for me," was the most common reason for dropping out given by female students in the High School and Beyond national survey. Interviews with poor young women reveal that their personal goals frequently don't coincide with the goals of the school (Fine, 1990). These students have a different definition of what it means to be a "good daughter," a different sense of what success is, and different views of knowl-

edge, intelligence, and what is important to know (Lutrell, 1989). Whether they finish their high school diploma or not, schools should seek to engage these young women in learning that relates to their gender and social class.

For these students, and to some extent for the students who openly reject school culture as well, the critical pedagogy movement of Paulo Freire offers hope. In his book, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he urges that school content should focus on issues relevant to the oppression of the poor. Why not focus the content of school on the ways in which schools alienate working-class and poor children? Why not teach about poverty and affluence, oppression and privilege, ascribed gender roles and discrimination in ways that are meaningful to students? Why not listen to their unheard voices and work with them to create a curriculum that does respond to them?

Lastly, we must take our lessons for success from resilient students, those who achieve quite well in our schools despite poverty and class differences. As Diane Pollard (1989) aptly demonstrates, these students have three major characteristics that appear to determine their success in school: a willingness and ability to cross cultural barriers, confidence in themselves as academic learners, and role models who care about them as learners and show them the way.

Since we can hardly expect that all poor children will be able to make these daunting cultural leaps by themselves, we as educators have a responsibility to:

- Make our schools more accepting and affirming of working-class and lower-class cultural norms for young women as well as young men.

- Provide many opportunities for people who have been filtered out of the mainstream to return to school without stigma. Fewer women than men are currently able to return to school because of their family responsibilities.

- Become aware of our own class and gender perspectives, so that we are not injuring students with our own psychological agenda.

- Integrate critical pedagogy techniques in all our courses and in informal conversation with students.

- Encourage non-traditional gender rôles and career options for all students, but particularly those that lead women to greater economic self-determination through the study of math, science, and technology.

- Eliminate programs that train students for jobs that pay below the poverty level (i.e., high school food service training and cosmetology).

- Provide student education and supportive services regarding pregnancy, domestic violence, substance abuse, and family relationships.

- Provide parents with information about the negative consequences in American society of families' separation of tasks by gender (i.e., irresponsible, aggressive boys and undereducated, overworked girls).

- Implement comparable worth in school district pay structures.

- Reorganize the school calendar and provide adjunctive services to meet the needs of poor working mothers. ❖

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Who Are the Poor Children?

The child, beautifully dressed, possibly overdressed, wearing shoes several sizes too small. The child without socks, without gloves, wearing an old winter jacket without buttons. The teenager with a toothache, whose smile reveals several rotting and missing teeth. The extremely quiet child; the overly angry child. The child whose nose runs all winter long. The child with learning disabilities; the child with emotional impairments. The child living in suburbia who has never been inside an elevator. The child you normally would never notice, who looks and acts like everyone else, who is no trouble at all.

by Judith Greenbaum, Ph.D., Project Associate

Federal Definition of Poverty

The federal government defines poverty in terms of cash income. The formula used to calculate the federal poverty level was adopted in 1969 by the Social Security Administration. It had been determined that the average family spent one-third of its income on food. The Department of Agriculture had developed minimum daily nutritional requirements for an individual and determined the cost of a basic food plan needed to meet the requirements. The formula was simple: multiply the cost of the necessary food by three to determine the basic income needed to provide the required food, and multiply the resultant figure by the size of the family to determine the poverty level for that size family. We have used this formula ever since. The poverty level is adjusted annually to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index.

The poverty level for a family of four in 1990 was $12,675, and for a family of three it was $10,560. According to the Census Bureau (1990) 31.5 million people or 13 percent of all Americans had incomes below the federal poverty level. The poverty level governs eligibility for many federal and state benefit programs.

Federal Anti-poverty Programs

Anti-poverty programs include cash supplements, food, housing, health care, compensatory education, and employment. Families with children who live below the poverty level are eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). However, in 1988, AFDC plus food stamps for a family of four amounted to only 66 percent of the poverty level. People living below the poverty level are also eligible for Medicaid. However, for various reasons, nearly half of all poor children do not receive these benefits (Reed and Sautter, 1990). Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is available for children and adults with disabilities who live below the poverty level. However, SSI benefits are difficult to access, and many eligible individuals do not receive these benefits.

People are eligible for food stamps if they earn no more than 133 percent of the federal poverty level. Eligibility for such programs as the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC), the Early, Periodic Screening, Testing and Diagnostic Program (EPSDT), Head Start, Chapter I, and free and reduced school lunch are all determined by cash income level, as are certain federally sponsored career and vocational education and job training programs. However, most of these programs are not funded at a level to serve more than a small fraction of eligible children.

Other Definitions of Poverty

Is the federal poverty formula relevant to today's economic conditions? Currently the average family spends one-fifth of its income on food, due largely to the high cost of housing and child care. With that in mind, the multiplier used in determining the poverty level should be five rather than three times the cost of basic food. Using this formula, the poverty level for a family of four in 1990 would have been raised to $17,600. Many question whether even this income is enough for a family to feed,

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house, clothe, and educate healthy, competent children.

Should the definition of poverty be based only on cash income? Supplementary census data in 1980 included such things as health care usage, labor force participation, indoor plumbing, electric lighting, and telephone. These and other resources (e.g., transportation and child care) can impact profoundly on the welfare of children and families. Shouldn't they be factored into the poverty level?

Should a definition of poverty be based only on tangible resources? Or should it include the absence of self respect, a sense of hopelessness, and psychopathology? Are these problems part of the definition of poverty or are they caused by poverty?

The Causes of Poverty

Poverty is largely caused by economic problems in the community and society at large. Some current economic causes are the recession, the tremendous loss of manufacturing jobs in the last 10-15 years, work disincentives in public assistance programs (i.e., the removal of one dollar of benefit payment for every dollar earned), and the low minimum wage. Poverty is also related to individual characteristics such as inability to work due to age, severe disability, or destructive patterns of behavior. And last, but not least, poverty is strongly related to racism, sexism, and other biases that prevent the access of certain groups of people to educational and employment opportunities.

The Working Poor

Nearly half of the heads of all poor households are employed, and other family members may be employed part time. However, the minimum wage of $3.85 an hour in 1990, the full-time equivalent of $7,700 per year, placed a family of four $5,000 below the poverty level. As of April 1, 1991, the minimum wage was raised to $4.25 per hour. This raise will amount to only $800 per year.

Many heads of poor households are unemployed workers. Aren't unemployment benefits sufficient to keep them out of poverty? Unfortunately, the average unemployment insurance benefit is just $161 a week. This, too, places a family of four far below the federal poverty level. Six out of every ten unemployed workers get no jobless benefits at all (UAW, 1991). Their benefits run out before they find a new job.

The "Truly Disadvantaged"

There is a subset of low income persons who have problems in addition to poverty. These have been variously called the persistent poor, the underclass, the discouraged poor, the truly disadvantaged, or simply, the jobless. These estimated two-to-three million people live in areas characterized by chronic unemployment, long-term poverty, and high crime rates. Children growing up in these neighborhoods are more likely to be in foster care, to be committed to juvenile detention centers, to drop out of school, and to become drug addicts, and/or criminals. It is these children who need multiple societal resources in order to survive. These children and their families pose the most difficult problems for our educational systems.

Poverty and Social Class

Definitions of social class always include income. In the United States the more formal definitions of social class usually take into account such things as the highest educational level attained and the type of occupation, usually of the head of household. Race, gender, and national origin strongly influence informal social class divisions. Other social and cultural factors have less influence. Social class has a power component, and lower class and poor people feel, and are, powerless. However, only the poor have serious food, clothing, shelter, and health care problems.

We clearly have large and growing income differences in the United States. However, there has always been a question about whether we in the United States have a class system and about how much mobility exists between social classes.

Our democratic ideals speak against a class system. Our public educational system was founded on the premise that education should be the key that unlocks the gates between the social classes and helps students along the uphill path out of poverty. Some resilient children of poverty, with strong educational support, do manage to move into the middle class.

The Effects of Poverty on Children

Children are the poorest group in our society, with more than one in five living in households whose income is below the poverty level. Poor children live in a difficult and dangerous world. Poverty increases the likelihood of such negative life events as housing problems, financial difficulties, poor health, criminal victimization, death of a close friend or relative, and consequent emotional stress. Poverty can cause developmental and health problems in children, and it can lead to poor school attendance and low achievement (Danziger and Stern, 1990).

Unfortunately, many of us still believe that poverty is caused by something within the individual: lack of motivation or lack of intelligence. Many of us think of low-income children and their families as defi-

cient, as failures. Poor children themselves internalize these attitudes. It is no wonder that poor children are more likely than non-poor children to have negative attitudes toward school and are three times as likely to drop out of school (Danziger and Stern, 1990).

Poverty can be a significant barrier to parent involvement, despite the fact that poor parents, like rich parents, are concerned about their children's education. Low-income parents, often poorly educated and poorly clothed, internalizing society's low opinion of themselves, can feel inadequate when interacting with their child's teachers. There is evidence that poor mothers often feel depressed and overwhelmed by their environment (Danziger and Stern, 1990). Special outreach strategies which take into account these feelings need to be employed to encourage these parents to become a part of the school's parent involvement programs.

Winning the "War on Poverty"

We have long known that if children come to school hungry, tired, or sick they can't learn. But is it possible to reduce poverty, or the effects of poverty? We *have* largely won the war on poverty for our elderly population. Through such social spending as Social Security and Medicare we have reduced their poverty rate from 35 percent in 1959 to 11 percent in 1989 (DeParle, 1991). Can we do the same for children?

Increases in social spending in the areas of housing, food, and health care, in particular pre-natal care, can help reduce the effects of poverty for the vast majority of poor children and their families. "Top priority should be given to the creation of jobs that pay a living wage" (Reed and Sautter, 1990) in order to bring the working poor out of poverty. These efforts require policy changes at the highest levels of government.

The School's Role

Schools can help reduce the effects of poverty through expanded early childhood education programs, strong parent involvement programs, career and vocational education programs, collaboration with social service and health agencies in the community, and in particular, through an awareness of how negative attitudes and low expectations exacerbate the problems faced by poor children and their families. ❖

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Resilient Children

by Bob Croninger, Associate Director for Race Equity

WE are not surprised when poor children fail in school or stumble in life. We are surprised when they don't. Perhaps that is why we know so little about poor children who actually do well in school, even though some achieve national fame and become cultural heros. Psychologists call these children resilient. They are able to succeed and do well in life despite severe hardship and adversity. Their personal stories tell of courage, strength, ingenuity, and persistence. They remind us that children, even in the most difficult of situations, can and do develop into competent adults.

A number of recent studies look at the lives of resilient children and their families. These studies examine the factors that contribute to the success of children living in difficult situations. Some of the initial findings are encouraging, especially for educators, for they suggest that schools can foster resiliency among a wide range of children, including children who live in poverty. Among other things, schools can promote high expectations for success. They can also help children develop academic and social competencies, collaborate more closely with other caregivers, and provide supplemental resources to help children and their families deal with stressful life events.

What follows is a sketch of some of what we know about resilient children and their families. It describes traits, competencies, strategies, and resources that help children overcome hardships and adversities. Schools cannot control all of these factors, at least not directly, but they can develop an environment that

acknowledges and supports many of them. Additional information about resilient children and their families can be found in Garmezy (1982), Luthar and Zigler (1991), Pollard (1989), and Werner (1989).

• Resilient children have well-developed social skills. They are cooperative, socially responsive, and out going. Many also have a good sense of humor. They use a wide repertoire of strategies to resolve conflicts with others.

• Resilient children believe that they can affect their surroundings and their lives. They have a sense of personal competence and ability. They have faith in themselves, though they are not afraid to seek out help or advice from significant others.

• Teachers and parents describe resilient children as reflective. Resilient children consider the likely effects of their actions. They exercise foresight, develop future plans, and take active steps to address problems that confront them.

• Resilient children have hobbies and are often involved in school activities and community organizations. These interests are often a source of personal pride and provide important outlets during times of crises.

• Resilient children do *not* conform to narrow sex stereotypes. Resilient girls are often more independent and achievement-oriented than their peers; resilient boys are often more nurturing and cooperative than their counter-parts.

• Resilient children are able to cross cultural boundaries without sacrificing their sense of self-worth and personal identity. This is especially true of resilient children who come from populations that have historically been the victims of discrimination and prejudice.

• Resilient children find reliable support and plenty of positive attention from at least one caregiver early in life. The support can come from a parent, grandparent, older sibling, or another significant adult. It is not the structure of the family but the quality of care that predicts resiliency among children.

• Parents of resilient children are often concerned about and involved in their child's schooling. They believe that education is important and that it will help their child become a more successful and competent adult.

• Resilient children also find support outside of their families. They rely on an informal network of peers and adults for acceptance, information, and counseling, especially during times of crises. This network may include close friends, relatives, adult neighbors, youth workers, religious leaders, or favorite teachers.

• Parents of resilient children know about and use community services and informal support networks to help them cope with adversity. They rely on professionals, family, and friends to supplement their personal resources for coping with crises and difficult situations. ❖

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Scoring the Checklist

(See pages 18-19)

Section I

10-21 YES You have the basic components of an effective program. See section II of the checklist to determine additional program goals.

0-9 YES Administrative leadership and staff training are needed to address the educational needs of poor children more effectively.

Section II

9-14 YES Your responses show evidence of high commitment to the education of low-income children.

4-8 YES You appear to be working hard to provide educational support for low-income children. However, additional school-based services might be needed.

0-3 YES You need to take a second look at your school, your students, their families, and the community to make sure there are no unknown or unmet needs related to poverty.

The Checklist:

How Does Your School Respond to Poverty?

by Judith Greenbaum, Ph.D., Project Associate

Directions: The purpose of this checklist is to initiate discussion about how schools can address the needs of poor children more effectively. Many of the questions are compound questions, with several examples. They may be difficult to answer. You may find yourself answering yes to part of a question and no to other parts of the same question. If you can answer yes to any part of a question, count that question as a yes. Consider the remaining parts of each question as future objectives for your schools.

The checklist has been divided into two major sections for scoring. The first contains questions important for all schools, regardless of the number of students living in poverty. These questions deal with some of the more familiar educational elements of effective schools as seen through the prism of poverty.

The second major section expands the notion of what schooling in the 1990s is about: interagency collaboration and the school's role in facilitating the delivery of comprehensive services to children and their families in order to support and enhance their education.

The significance of your answers to questions in the second section depends largely on whether or not the population of your school includes poor children, and whether this number is more than a handful. However, you must have the data to back up your perception. Many school districts in middle-class or wealthy suburban communities have unrecognized and uncounted numbers of children living in poverty. Even in districts with documented numbers of these students, the extent of the needs of these children is often unknown and unmet.

Many of the services mentioned in this checklist cost money. Many, but not all. Some require staff time or parent time, either volunteer or paid. Often federal, state or private funding is available, but it must be located and applied for. In some cases a community agency is already doing the job so that only coordination is needed.

Schools are *not* being asked to solve all of society's ills by themselves. However, schools can play a significant role in remedying some of the effects of poverty.

Section I:

Awareness and Information

YES NO

❑ ❑ 1. Are staff aware of their own privileged status and how that influences their attitudes toward poor children and their families?

❑ ❑ 2. Are staff aware of the detrimental effects of the prevalent myths about poverty, for example, that people are poor because they are stupid, that people are poor because they are lazy, and that most poor people are members of minority groups?

❑ ❑ 3. Do staff recognize the strengths of individual poor children and their families and build upon them in school programming?

❑ ❑ 4. Do staff serve as role models by communicating respect for all children and their families?

❑ ❑ 5. Are school-wide family needs assessments conducted yearly and at initial enrollment to determine the needs of children and families?

❑ ❑ 6. Are staff provided with information and training relevant to the social, emotional, health, and educational needs of children in poverty?

❑ ❑ 7. Do teachers know who are the poor children in their classes?

❑ ❑ 8. Are school data collected which identify children in poverty by race, gender, and national origin as well as their academic achievement, participation in extra-curricular activities, and referral to gifted programs, special education services or disciplinary procedures?

❑ ❑ 9. Are the privacy rights of all children and their families scrupulously protected?

Curriculum and Instruction

❑ ❑ 10. Are the issues of poverty, unemployment, and related social policy discussed with students during social studies class time?

❑ ❑ 11. Are life experiences of poor children included in the curriculum without negative connotations?

❑ ❑ 12. Are career education and vocational education infused into the curriculum from kindergarten through twelfth grade?

❑ ❑ 13. Are instructional support services available for children who need them, such as tutoring and mentoring?

❑ ❑ 14. Are instructional strategies such as cooperative learning and activity-based learning regularly employed in the classroom?

❑ ❑ 15. Has ability grouping and tracking been eliminated for the most part?

❑ ❑ 16. Are educationally sound alternatives to suspension and expulsion available?

Parent Involvement

❑ ❑ 17. Is a staff member or parent designated as a parent involvement coordinator?

❑ ❑ 18. Is the parent involvement coordinator trained to work with parents of different cultural, linguistic, and social groups?

❑ ❑ 19. Is special outreach made to parents of children in poverty, offering support, parent education programs, referral to social service agencies, and employment opportunities?

❑ ❑ 20. Are community liaisons or interpreters available from different national origin groups to help families participate in school activities and access social services, if needed?

❑ ❑ 21. Do parent-staff advisory groups represent all segments of the school community (e.g. race, gender, national origin, social class)?

Section II:

Comprehensive Services for Students and Families

YES NO

❑ ❑ 22. Are free or reduced-cost breakfast and lunch available in school for children who are poor?

❑ ❑ 23. Are teen parenting programs available for student parents to enable them to stay in school after the birth of a child and continue their education?

❑ ❑ 24. Does the school arrange for annual hearing and vision screening from the state department of public health for all students and refer students for additional services when necessary?

❑ ❑ 25. Are all activities, textbooks, school pictures, uniforms, and snacks freely accessible to poor children without stigma?

❑ ❑ 26. Are social workers, counselors, nurses, and psychologists available to all children who need them, regardless of their eligibility for specific programs?

❑ ❑ 27. Does the school maintain a list of community agencies and programs that serve poor children, including eligibility requirements and the particular services provided and are these regularly disseminated to parents and staff?

❑ ❑ 28. Is one staff member responsible for the coordination of school and community-based social services for students and their families?

❑ ❑ 29. In an emergency is the staff able to refer students and their families to community organizations that supply food, clothing, shelter, or health care?

❑ ❑ 30. Is a comprehensive early childhood program, such as Head Start, available for low-income families in the school district?

❑ ❑ 31. Are flexible opportunities and support available to adult students who want to complete high school requirements or get a General Educational Development (GED) degree?

❑ ❑ 32. Have linkages been developed with local business and industry to fund innovative programs aimed at increasing the achievement and employability of low-income students?

❑ ❑ 33. Does the school have a health clinic or provide health services to students who need them?

❑ ❑ 34. Are adult volunteers such as big brothers and sisters or foster grandparents sought from the community to serve as role models or supporters for low-income children and their families?

❑ ❑ 35. Are staff, parents, and the community informed about how their local schools are funded and possible strategies for increasing funding?

Directions for scoring the Checklist appear on page 17.

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"It Takes The Whole Village To Educate A Child"

(An African Proverb)

by Salome Gebre-Egziabher, Field Services Specialist

CURRENT research makes it very clear that the academic success of most students is intrinsically interwoven with their families' socio-economic status. Proportionately speaking, students who repeat classes, drop out and score low on all kinds of tests are mostly African Americans, American Indians, Hispanics, and students with limited English proficiency, from female headed households and from economically impoverished backgrounds (U. S. Dept. of Education, 1990). Fully addressing the needs of all students, therefore, requires that we also address some of the socio-economic needs of students and their parents. Of course, students from any background can learn provided we have high expectations for them, and we help solve some of the more stressful problems that they face. (See Elizabeth Mimms's article on page 3.)

Hence policies and programs that address the socio-economic needs of poor students and their parents are needed if we are to improve the academic achievement of these students (Danziger and Stern, 1990, p. 41). At the present time we have some programs and individuals who are out there making a difference in the lives of a few students. Our goal should be to meet the needs of all students. This will have to be a responsibility of everybody, but schools are well positioned to be the focal point in this effort.

Demographers tell us that the majority of students of the twenty-first century are going to be of non-European origin and that the majority of them will be poor (Education Week Special Report,1986). The needs of these students will be more than instructional. They and their families will need social services, including housing, health care, employment, and education for the parents, who may also be teenagers. Therefore, schools have to be more than institutions of learning. They have to assist in providing and brokering social, health, housing, employment, and other such services. Schools have to become advocates for *all* children *and* their families.

The Elementary School Center (ESC) in New York City which believes in schools being advocates for all children is, for example, assisting three schools in New York City in implementing the idea. What the Center is suggesting is for schools to be the agents, the catalysts, that bring various child advocates and service providers to one location—the school. This will make it easier for students and parents to access all the services right away, when they need them, without the added burden of having to run around and negotiate each bureaucratic maze separately. In addition, having all the service providers at one location will facilitate the provision of comprehensive services. Currently, some schools are providing one kind of service or another within the school. However, the needs of the students are multidimensional and having just one service in the school is not making the necessary difference in the success of the students. Since the ESC is a recent program, it is too early to assess its impact. Nonetheless, from what we know about advocacy from programs such as Head Start and Chapter I, it is likely that it will have a positive and lasting impact on people's lives.

Schools also can and should become advocates for the gainful and meaningful employment of their students' parents. In the United States of America as in other parts of the world the educational achievement of children is highly correlated to the occupation and employment of their parents (Yeakey and Bennet, 1990). If educators do really believe that all children can succeed in school as well as in life, they have to advocate for the education, training, and employment of the parents. Some school districts are doing this in conjunction with business (Committee for Economic Development, 1991). Again most of what is suggested has not been in operation for a long time, so it is hard to ascertain the program's effectiveness.

More programs of this type are needed. Business's role should not be limited to restructuring of schools and providing hands-on training to students. Business should also take an active role in providing gainful and meaningful employment to parents. This idea can be built into the various programs in which business collaborates with schools and also be made part of the recommendation of the Committee for Economic Development as to what should be the role of business in school improvement. In the history of education in the United States, researchers indicate that one of the things that has made a difference in quality education and the educational achievement of students is parents' economic success (Yeakey and Bennet, 1990). If it is so, then at this

> Schools have to become advocates for *all* children *and* their families.

time in U. S. history when extensive layoffs of parents are being made, how much success can we expect from their children, our students?

For the last decade the key "buzz" words in education have been *effective schools*, *students at-risk*, *drop out prevention*, *restructuring of schools*, and *school improvement*. While these words and terms are meant to help us address the needs of students who are not doing well, they are in most cases limited to correcting only academic achievement and not economic needs. However, research indicates the academic achievement of students cannot be raised or enhanced without addressing their well being.

Raising achievement scores will require that we raise the political will to address the personal, economic, and educational needs of students and their families. Many of us who work with disadvantaged students, including a few CEOs of big business and school personnel who are providing some form of school-based non-academic services, are recommending that innovative teaching address the nonacademic needs of students as well as provide solutions to their academic problems. It is my belief that the core reason why innovative teaching has not succeeded is that schools are not providing comprehensive services, possibly the key to success for disadvantaged students.

Therefore as educators and concerned citizens, we need to be creative and sensitive to find solutions to help ameliorate the socio-economic predicaments of all children who are suffering. Above all we have to believe that our students and their parents are deserving citizens who need a little help from us now and then. If we believe this, we will always find ways and time to assist them.

As educators we also have to believe that we exist because our students exist and they because of us. Perhaps it is time for western education and history to put the African philosophy of existence into practice: I am because *we* are and *we* are because I am. We are all members of one village and the following recommendations are made in this spirit.

Recommendations for Schools:

1. The staff development office should train all school personnel so they can assist children and their families in obtaining social, economic, housing, mental and physical health, and other services that they need.

2. Schools should continue to provide information and workshops for parents regarding services, including employment. It is possible that business would be willing to help with these workshops.

3. Initiators and implementors of innovative programs such as effective schools, school restructuring, and school improvement programs should explicitly build in poverty reduction programs as part of the plan to increase academic achievement and parent training.

4. Schools should hire a full-time teacher or a social worker who will negotiate with the various bureaucracies for students and their families. Business might be willing to fund such a full-time position.

5. Schools and communities should create a city-wide council consisting of service agencies and businesses to assist in bridging rules and regulations as well as provide budgetary flexibility. This then will enable teachers to provide quality education to all students. ❖

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Pieces of the Puzzle:

Programs From Which We Can Learn

by Tasha Lebow, Field Services Specialist

EFFECTIVE program planning for children from poor families is similar to the early stage of putting together a jigsaw puzzle. We have some idea of the shape of each piece and how it relates to the whole picture, but we do not know its definite fit. A successful education can not be delivered in isolation from the student's life. The nature of poverty necessitates radical redefinition of the role of schools, their significance in the community, and the interrelationships among all child and family welfare providers. Effective solutions evolve when schools actively recognize the link and address issues traditionally outside their domain, such as health and social welfare, as many aspects of a student's life directly impact the success of the educational experience.

Insights into these puzzle pieces can be achievedby studying existing programs that successfully mediate conditions of poverty. But the concept directly duplicating model programs is inappropriate if we really plan to succeed. Lisbeth B. Shorr (1989) explains that, while the barriers facing poor children are vastly similar, it is most effective to analyze problems and develop strategies at the local level. Attention to the specific client population that considers the race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and locale of the client population will maximize success.

The following descriptions are given as sources of insight into strategies that can make a difference. These programs work because they address multiple needs of their client population. None works in isolation from other educational and social programs, but viewing the pieces separately may help conceptualize the finished jigsaw puzzle. Schools cannot solve the puzzle of poverty intervention alone. But they occupy a key position from which to spearhead communal efforts to solve the puzzle.

Building Competencies for Success

Since its inception as an anti-poverty program in 1966, the **Head Start** preschool program has documented success in creating positive school performance for poor children. Their comprehensive early childhood intervention to insure kindergarten readiness has demonstrated long term positive effects. One study has shown that 67 percent of the Head Start participants graduated from high school, compared to 49 percent of the control group. Nearly 40 percent of the Head Start participants had gone on to take some college level courses, compared to only 21 percent of the control group.

If any single model program does exist for expanding school success for poor children, it is likely to be Head Start. Many components of Head Start have implications for primary and secondary schools, as they provide important supports that significant for school success but are usually absent from K-12 programs. Parent involvement, health and nutrition, and social services are equal components with the educational program. Head Start families are visited at home where the child receives preliminary screening and assessment. This provides the school with essential contact and understanding about the child's world. Children are regularly screened for cognitive, health, and dental needs, and services are delivered through public health programs. The children are provided with nutritious meals in the school. Parent involvement programs that are culturally sensitive to the client population maintain home support for educational development. Besides employing many parents as paraprofessionals, Head Start empowers parents as the policy makers who help determine the design and delivery of the local program. High school completion programs, job counseling, and training referrals are also available for parents.

But, tragically, only one eligible student in five participates in Head Start programs due to limited external support and funding. Many of the key components are sadly missing from later schooling. Imagine the effects our schools could achieve if these success-building components were part of the early childhood and later school experience of all poor children.

Serving Children and Families through Comprehensive Programming

The complex problems of poverty can not be easily organized into independent spheres. Transcending the historic boundaries between educational and social services can facilitate more effective programming. Escaping the "turf" issues of rigidly defined spheres of influence allows collaboration and the development of creative responses.

The link between education and housing issues is being addressed by **Chicago's Center for Successful Child Development,** commonly known as the

Beethoven Project. The Project combines comprehensive preschool Head Start program and programs for parents, all delivered in the publicly subsidized Robert Taylor Homes. Only in its fourth year of operation, the project has been widely scrutinized by media and professionals as it is considered one of the most promising approaches. The preliminary assessments show increased skills and improved self-concept in the children participating. Long term studies of the children will be conducted.

The project coordinated comprehensive delivery of the essential social and human services needed by pregnant women, young families, and children. The Beethoven Project's innovation is delivery of services in the public housing where the families live. Full prenatal care with home visits by nurses, nutritional and emotional counseling, parent skill training, and other services are directed toward healthy early childhood development. The project stays in touch with young families through parent support groups and a parenting center to insure that the children will be socially, cognitively, and psychologically ready for school entry.

The Beethoven Project provided in-depth, multifaceted programming that responded to the diverse needs of its client population in an expedient and effective manner. The greatest lesson from the project may be its creative direction through a unique partnership between the State of Illinois, Chicago philanthropist Irving R. Harris, and the Chicago Urban League. Local corporations, foundations, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funded the Beethoven Project.

Urban Network, courtesy of Sharon E. Sutton

Fostering Inter-agency Collaborations That Integrate Services

Believing that the problems for inner city youth are not due to a lack of resources but to the lack of effective coordination, William G. Milliken founded **Cities In Schools (CIS).** Not so much a program, as a process, CIS endeavors to develop a systemic, cohesive approach to address the multitude of issues that simultaneously confront children in poverty. Cities in Schools assists the formation of a consortium of resource providers. The school is the focal point of an integrated human service delivery system designed to meet the real needs of students.

CIS's real gift is one of structure and process for schools, civic leaders, and private and public community resources. Too often service providers operate in isolation resulting in inefficient duplications or gaps in services. Locally the CIS model is supported through the development of a local board of directors who form a nonprofit corporation supported by area businesses, foundations, and individuals. This group (with national CIS staff assistance) works with the service providers to develop an expedient structure for inter-agency coordination.

Schools are seen as the hub for the delivery of services, and multidisciplinary teams are organized to provide direct services to small groups of students. This allows each child's needs to be holistically addressed. Individualized, coordinated strategies can be developed to provide each child the services needed to confront his or her social, educational, health, and emotional problems.

Since its conception in 1978, CIS has grown to a national program supported by federal and private funds serving over 50 communities. Within the Great Lakes states, Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Farmington (MN), Decatur (IL), Rock Island (IL), and Pontiac (MI) have participated in Cities In Schools projects.

Empowering Children to Be Positive Forces for Change

For over fifteen years, University of Michigan architecture Prof. Sharon E. Sutton has helped teachers take learning into the community through a process that empowers children to be change agents. **The Urban Network** educates and activates students to become catalysts for positive change in their local environment. Winner of the American Planning Association's Education Award for 1991, the project has been adopted by over 50 schools, including large urban and rural areas. It fosters an exchange between children, teachers, community residents, and design professionals in a particular school community,

to the advantage of all. The project includes a year-long curriculum which can be linked to math, science, and social studies classes. It concentrates on the assessment of community needs, concepts of design, and creative problem solving.

Though each participating school's project is unique, requiring individualized design, a typical Urban Network program involves these steps. The first semester consists of small hands-on activities and an evaluation of the school building, playground, neighborhood, and open spaces. The second semester, Enhancing Your Neighborhood, targets a specific need or builds upon an existing positive aspect. Students develop a plan of action which could include building a model of a proposed design, marketing the idea, political advocacy, or full-scale construction of small projects. Key players in the community (such as business people, civic leaders, or local churches) are invited to join the process.

One Urban Network school designed and constructed a musical climbing structure that contains wind chimes, drums, and gongs. The same school organized a neighborhood history street museum the previous year. Another school collaborated with college architecture students to design a play area. Other schools have organized recycling projects and designed and painted building murals.

But while the effects of the physical improvements created by the Urban Network can not be underestimated, its greatest outcome is likely the essential knowledge and positive experience in community action it provides. The children's efforts spearhead the collaboration with teachers, and with parents and professionals as well, in a learning process that results in a visible, useful—as well as beautiful—addition to the community.

Prof. Sutton emphasizes, "Educators must accept the responsibility that education is political." The Urban Network brings social justice, how we share resources and environment, into the learning process. It focuses on removing barriers that traditionally characterize education, such as the separation between school and personal life, school and community, and children from different backgrounds. Students find that learning takes on new meaning because its relevance to their daily lives is undeniable.

Expanding the School's Rôle Within the Community

Within poor communities schools are often a primary anchoring institution of positive activity and resource. Recognition of the school's stable relationship with the neighborhood and as a central point of contact for the family has led some schools to formally redefine their role in the community. The successes of school-based health care centers in many urban districts is one way in which this is actualized.

Less costly and complex strategies can also help expand the resources in poor communities. In some Detroit Public Schools, the **Lighted Schoolhouse Project** has promoted closer ties to the community by providing access to the physical resources of the school. Classroom and gymnasium use for after-school activities was promoted and offered to community groups for nominal fees. The minimal coordination along with custodial and security needs were handled through an office of the local recreational department.

Some Detroit principals took the concept of expanding the school's role even further. An unused classroom was transformed into a Parent Center, that contained a typewriter, telephone (for local calls), phone books, guides for community resources, and other essential aids like the local newspaper, dictionaries, thesaurus, and basic reference materials. Parents visiting the school were encouraged to visit the Center to make use of its resources as needed. The school's library was also opened for in-house use by parents. Principals of participating schools reported a significant improvement in school-community relations. They felt the project, sponsored and funded through local corporations and businesses, provided essential services to the poor community. They were proud of the Parent Center for providing a resource to parents who may be job hunting or pursuing other means of improving their life conditions.

Providing Supports and Incentives For School Success

Partnerships can assist the provision of incentives and supports for students. Providing long-term educational planning and financial incentives for school success can give students positive goals towards which to work. Cleveland (Ohio) Public Schools has joined forces with local corporations and foundations to form the **Scholarship in Escrow (SIE)** program, the largest incentive program of its kind in the country. All public school students earn money for each A, B, or C they receive in core academic classes in seventh through twelfth grade. They have access to the escrow money for tuition or fees to any area university, community college, or training program for ten years beyond graduation. As a recruitment tool, many Ohio universities match or exceed the escrow amount.

The incentive is a powerful reward for children from families who do not have the financial resources to easily access post-secondary programs. But the project's designers realized that future financial resources alone do not guarantee educational success. The maintenance of a comprehensive safety net of educational and community resources (i.e. counseling, social services, etc.) clearly effects the success of students in the program. SIE employs professional staff called advocates, who provide pivotal support services to students. The advocates perform diverse roles for students including that of personal and educational counselors, referral agents to outside services, and mentors. "The financial incentive is the attraction to students, but the human connection is more important than the money, when it comes to student success," says Mrs. Rosie Doughty, SIE's Director. Comprehensive, humanely delivered support services are essential to aid students set goals, plan accordingly, and succeed. The financial incentive provides the means for achieving their long-range goals.

Providing Effective Crisis Intervention Programs

The very nature of the developmental stage makes all adolescents at times high-risk students. The hallmarks of the age—experimentation, peer group identification, willful independence—can lead to full-blown crises. Schools can provide significant interventions for students in crisis. For poor students, whose families don't have access to other resources, in-school programs can be life-saving. In-school intervention programs for substance and alcohol abuse and issues of health and sexuality have rescued many students from high-risk behaviors.

Teenage pregnancy is one of the quickest short-cuts to poverty. Catastrophic to a young women's education, it also short circuits her expectations for her future life. Quality prenatal care in early pregnancy is unfortunately a luxury in our society. Yet it is recognized as the best protection against low birthweight, birth defects, exposure to drugs and alcohol which are leading causes of mental, physical, and emotional problems later in life. Its absence multiplies risks for the children of teenage mothers.

Schools can effectively intervene for both the high-risk young mother and her baby. With commitment and planning they can create safety nets for the young mothers and aid the healthy development of the children who will be school constituents soon themselves. Effective programs for pregnant and parenting students and their children focus on good prenatal care, school continuation, supportive career counseling and skill development, parenting skills, and direct links to other essential social services. A significant role for teenage fathers is actively, aggressively pursued and included in the strongest programs. Supports that buttress the family create successful environments for both child and parents.

Reinforcing the Family

Schools that implement family learning models, such as family literacy programs, can also gain extensive benefits. When adult and child learners work together, positive school-related attitudes and behaviors are reinforced.

Daniel Hall, Age 10, Shooting Back, Washington, DC

Programs that serve the adult learner in partnership with children, as in the Family Math program (see *Equity Coalition*, Vol. 1, No. 1) build skills for all participants and often engage parents with a positive experience on which future involvement can be built. Numerous bilingual programs institute this approach, to the vast advantage of the individuals and the collective family.

Today an extended family is a luxury. Many children would benefit greatly from the caring and support of elderly people. Programs that utilize senior citizens and retired people in the schools as teacher's aides, tutors, mentors, and confidants can provide essential nurturing to the children and can provide assistance to professional staff. Such programs that provide wages or stipends for senior "volunteers" aid the income of our older community members, who are often living near the poverty level themselves.

Affirming the Child's Experience and Significance

Schools and other agencies have a long history of providing cultural, social, and recreational opportunities to enrich the lives of children living in poverty. The most effective programs affirm the child's experience and significance in the world and build skills as well. The photo on the previous page was taken by Daniel Hall, age 10, through **Shooting Back**, a photojournalism project involving homeless children in shelters of Washington D.C. Hall's photo was taken in response to the assignment to document a single block of his neighborhood. Director Jim Hubbard provides homeless children with cameras, darkroom lessons, consultation, and mentoring opportunities with professional photographers. The brilliant results of their work are now a national touring exhibit and a documentary to be broadcast by PBS. Besides enriching through the creation of art, the project provides a crucial validation of the children's view of the world and a new medium with which to express their personal voices. Similar benefits have been gained by programs promoting creative writing and artistic expression.

Providing Flexible Re-entry Programs

Education is the bridge to bettering one's status, as it is the primary key to better paying jobs. But those members of our society most in need of the mobility provided by a successful education are unfortunately those most alienated from the educational process.

One key strategy for the success of high-risk students is to "tailor-make" programs to serve the client population and to present inclusive curriculum. This is especially critical for high school completion and re-entry programs, as often large personal barriers were created through an ineffective and painful primary educational experience. The design and maintenance of programs relevant to the population are especially critical if the parents of our students—and possibly the students who we lose today—are to return and succeed in school.

One source of targeted materials is the **Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA).** It has funded production of many resources for educational planning and counseling that specifically address the re-entry needs of women students. They have produced both training models for professional staff and for studens. Some relate directly to the needs of rural women and women of color. They can provide many sensitive insights to aid effective program development as well as supply resources for the classroom and counseling office.

Multiplying Our Successes

Many successful programs prove disappointing when they are expanded or adapted to a new setting or population. Specific differences in setting or participants, though seemingly minute, can have a profound effect on outcome. In this last model we find, not only an exciting program for expanding basic skills, but an excellent example of an effective adaptation.

Though only in its third year of operation, the innovative K-3 program, **Success for All**, is positively effecting basic skills achievement for all children, regardless of their background. Grounded in the commitment to unanimous educational success and solid research on instructional outcomes, the program ensures that participating students will all perform at grade level in reading, language, and mathematics by the end of third grade. The intensive basic skills development program includes half-day preschool and all-day kindergarten that emphasizes development of language, academic, creative, and movement skills. Intensive one-to-one tutoring, regular assessment, and family support services are delivered to guarantee that the students experience early and continued progress in their reading programs. Family support teams of social workers provide outreach to students' homes, delivering diverse resources to reinforce the child's education. Besides supplementing the educational process, they are also able to assist with health, social services, or other ancillary needs of the family.

Developed with the Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students at Johns Hopkins University and the Abell Foundation, the program is in its third year of operation in Baltimore's inner–

city schools. Second year results show substantial progress, with all children reading close to or above grade level and far outscoring the control group. In Philadelphia, the program contributed to significantly reduce grade-level retentions and special education referrals in schools serving primarily disadvantaged African-American students.

Philadelphia's Francis Scott Key Elementary School increased the achievement of its limited English proficiency students by adding appropriate modifications to the Success for All program. The program was linked to the district's immersion/ESL program for its many Southeast-Asian students. Many of these children came from poor homes in which the fathers speak little English and the mothers speak none. The shortage of bilingual teachers gave the students no in-school instruction opportunities in their home language. The Key School modified the tutoring component to include fifth and seventh grade Southeast-Asian students to provide instructional and mentoring support for the younger students. This also provided the older students with a rewarding experience. In its second year of operation the program's preliminary evaluations are promising. They show, as with other Success for All programs, that its effects are strongest in children who were furthest behind in skill level and who began the program in kindergarten and first grade as part of the regular reading curriculum. ❖

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Cities in Schools, Mr. Al Ward, North Central Regional Director, 122 South Michigan Ave., Suite 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; 312/427-2017.

Two Model Programs: Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy and Building Youth Self-Sufficiency and **Effective Teenage Parenting.** Children's Defense Fund Publications, 122 C St., N.W., Washington DC 20001; 212/628-8787.

Head Start Regional Office, Department of Health & Human Services, 21st Floor, 105 W. Adams, Chicago, IL 60603; 312/353-4241.

Ounce of Prevention, 188 W. Randolph, Suite 2200, Chicago, IL 60601; 312/853-6080.

Scholarship in Escrow Program, Ms. Rosie Doughty, Director, Cleveland Public Schools, 1380 E. Sixth Street, Room 312, Cleveland, OH 44114; 216/781-7430.

Shooting Back Education and Media Center, Jim Hubbard, Director, 1901 Eighteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.; 202/232-5169.

Success for All, The Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students, 3505 North Charles St., Baltimore, MD, 21218; 301/338-7570.

The Urban Network, Prof. Sharon E. Sutton, 3120 Art and Architecture, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109; 313/936-0201.

Women's Educational Equity Act Materials are available through the WEEA Educational Development Center, 55 Chapel St., Suite 200, Newton, MA 02160; 800/ 225-4276.

The Changing Demographics of the Poor in America

by Norma Barquet, Associate Director for National Origin Equity

FOR over thirty years, concerns for poor and immigrant children have been gaining serious attention from every sector of our society. Federal and state governments and the public and private sectors have tried to intervene in finding solutions. Head Start, the Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESSA), Title I, and Title VII of the Bilingual Education Act are examples of such programs. But the plight of America's poor and immigrant children continues to be lost in rhetorical debate that has not led to substantial improvement.

These students, who are labeled educationally disadvantaged, are students who have socio-economic barriers to overcome in one or a combination of the following educational settings: their schools, their homes, and/or their communities. It is not their inability to learn or the lack of parental concern that is the cause of their underachievement; instead, it is the socio-economic disadvantages that shape their learning environments.

A growing number of these children are homeless. Others live in homes without electricity, heat, or even adequate food. Their homes, for the most part, do not have books, magazines, or newspapers available to read. The schools that these children attend have libraries that are outdated. New books are hard to come by and

the audio-visual equipment is usually old and in need of repair. The pieces of play equipment in their school yards and parks do not resemble the ones that our suburban children enjoy. Their communities are infected with poverty, drugs and crime. Their neighbors are either underemployed, looking for jobs, or members of our underclass.

While the largest number of poor in this country continues to be white, the composition of America's poor class is rapidly changing along the historic lines of oppression. Women, children, people of color, and recent immigrants presently constitute the fastest growing poverty groups in America (U.S. Census, 1990, p. 9; First et al., 1988, p. 26).

The demographics of educationally disadvantaged populations in this country are not surprising if we examine the causal relationship between social oppression and poverty. Lack of educational opportunities, job discrimination, lack of health services, and poor housing, are just a few of the social conditions to which we subject the poor. It is the combination of several or all of these conditions that afflict people who have been historically the victims of racism, classism, sexism, and many other forms of discrimination, both in their native land and in this country, that makes it very difficult for some groups to overcome poverty and its devastating effects.

The most agreed upon indicators that researchers use to identify educationally disadvantaged populations are: (1) minority status (race/ethnicity); (2) poverty; (3) living in a single-parent family; (4) having a poorly educated mother; and (5) having a non-English background (Pallas, Natriello, McDill, p. 16). For immigrant groups their social class background in their native home is also a determinant of their educational and socioeconomic success in this country (Perlmann, 1988, p. 5).

In Harold Hodgkinson's report, *All One System* (1985), these indicators become more significant as we examine the demographic trends. He projects that our schools will be seeing a significant increase in the number of minority children from poor homes who also come from single-parent households. The projected increase in the numbers of students from non-English backgrounds is already a reality in our classrooms. Many of these children come from war-torn countries in Central America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Many have not attended school for a number of years. Their lives in refugee camps amidst violence and in sub-standard living conditions have also increased their chances of health related problems. Others, such as the children of migrant workers, live in similar conditions throughout our country.

Marilyn Nolt, Souderton, PA

As for the issue of minority status, we know that minority children, particularly those from groups that have historically been oppressed, such as American Indians, African Americans, and Hispanics, have, over time, achieved at substantially lower levels than children of European descent in our public schools. As early as third grade, minority students begin to underachieve, as compared with their peers, in standardized reading and math tests. It should not be surprising, then, that the dropout rate for Hispanics was 36 percent compared with 15 percent for African Americans and 13 percent for whites (National Center for Education Statistics, 1989, p. 16).

Due to the lack of opportunities afforded to these groups by our society, and the rate of fertility among them, children of color are over-represented in the poorest segment of the U.S. population. According to new Census figures the percentages of Hispanic, American-Indian, African-American, and some Southeast-Asian children living in poverty are staggering. In 1989, nearly 35 percent of Hispanic children and 43 percent of African-American children were living in poverty (U.S. Census, 1990, p. 9).

Research has also shown that children from single parent homes tend to have more academic problems in school and are at higher risk of becoming economically disadvantaged. According to Census figures, in 1985 one in every four children lived in a single parent home (U.S.

Bureau of the Census, 1986). A disproportionate number of these children are Hispanic or African-American. Sex and race discrimination in employment practices compound this trend in households headed by minority women. In 1989, 47 percent of African-American and Hispanic families headed by women lived below the poverty line (U. S. Census, 1990, p. 10).

The interdependence of these indicators must be noted particularly when we discuss the relationship between the level of educational achievement of mothers and the future success of their children. Poorly educated women, for instance, are also disproportionately affected by the consequences of discrimination such as poverty, unemployment, low wages, and teen pregnancy, to name a few. The issue of low educational achievement should therefore not been seen as as having a direct causal relationship, but indeed of being inter-related to other conditions which further hamper the ability of these mothers to help their children. In 1986, one of every five children age 17 or younger lived with a mother who had not completed high school. Hispanic women, for instance, have a lower median age and are less likely to graduate from school than women from other groups. Eighty percent of Hispanic women who do not finish school head households subsisting below the poverty level.

As for students who come from a non-English language background, we know that, based on immigration patterns and birth rates, the number of these students will increase threefold, from 2 million to over 7 million by the year 2000 (Pallas, Natriello, McDill, p. 20). Hispanics represent the largest group; Asian Americans, although fewer in number, represent 44 percent of all new immigrants admitted to the United States (Hodgkinson, p. 7). Some of these Asian students come with high levels of education from their native lands; however, others such as the Hmong, Laotians, and the most recent waves of Vietnamese come with lower levels of education.

In projecting the number of children who will live in poverty and in identifying who they will be in the 21st century, we must look at the variables that have been presented and how they impact subgroups of the population. We know, for instance, that African Americans, Hispanics, women, and children are the fastest growing poverty groups in America. We also know that today one in four Americans is non-white. Due to immigration and birth rate patterns it is projected that by the year 2000 one of every three of us will be non-white; that by the year 2020 one of every four children will be Hispanic, and finally that only 54 percent of all children age 17 or younger will be white (Hodgkinson, 1985, p. 7).

If we consider this population trend, the present status of people of color and women vis-a-vis the indicators previously discussed, and the slow progress in education to reverse the patterns of failure, the future of minority children looks dim, as does the future of the United States if these trends aren't reversed.

The relationship between oppression, poverty, and educationally disadvantaged status can no longer be the subject of debate. As educators we can have a significant impact on the home and community of these children by making the schools the educational and support center of families. (See Salome Gebre-Egziabher's and Tasha Lebow's articles elsewhere in this issue.)

Much can also be done to improve the schools they attend. To do this, we must bring about greater quality and equity in the funding, policies, structures, delivery systems, and environments that affect poor children in public education.

As educators we must assume responsibility for helping reverse the cycle of poverty in which poor children are trapped in our society. We do have a choice. We can either invest in their education now, or we can pay threefold in social welfare later. Their future and ours depends on the choices that we make today.

Schools Can Make a Difference

Since school success is especially critical to help less advantaged children break away from the cycle of poverty, the following are some of the conditions of successful schools:

- Ensure adequate and equitable funding for all schools.
- Create school cultures that value all students, including poor and immigrant children, where adults believe in their ability to learn.
- Create supportive working environments where teachers learn and share innovative instructional techniques and practices.
- Provide high quality, culturally sensitive, and language compatible pre-school programs such as Even Start and Head Start for all children, but specifically target low-income and immigrant children.
- Provide all students with high quality, culturally relevant, and language compatible curriculums and programs using state-of-the-art educational materials and resources.

• Provide in-school and after-school academic support systems for all children to minimize the risk of failure.

• Promote heterogeneous ability grouping to maximize the opportunities for all children to learn and interact across linguistic, racial/ethnic, gender, and socio-economic lines.

• Provide enrichment activities and programs in a variety of areas such as math, science, sports, and the arts for all children.

• Develop meaningful parent and community involvement programs to establish positive communication and cooperation between the home, local community organizations, and the schools.

• Develop partnership programs with business and industry to provide jobs, scholarships, and other incentive programs for students and their families. ❖

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Equal and Adequate Funding for Urban Schools

by Ted Wilson, Research Associate

URBAN public schools have not been reliable ladders out of poverty. Somehow we must help our public schools do a better job of serving the urban poor. Some people question whether "throwing money at the problem" will do any good (Hanushek, 1989), but Elizabeth Mimms and other authors in this issue show that additional resources, wisely managed, can make a big difference. How are we to pay for these new programs?

The U.S. spent $200 billion on public elementary and secondary schools in 1988, about 7 percent of its gross national product (Guthrie et al., 1988, pp. 20). This was less than thirteen other major industrialized nations spent on pre-collegiate education (Rasell, 1990).

On the average, local taxes provided about 44 percent of this support for public schools, state taxes about 50 percent, and federal taxes only about 6 percent (National Education Association, 1990). Hence, most school funding comes from either local or state taxes. Unfortunately, these public state and local revenues are not distributed equitably among all children.

Prodded by the courts, state legislatures have tried to equalize monies available to rich and poor school districts. However, lobbying by wealthy, suburban districts and voter tax revolts have hindered efforts to reform state school-finance systems. Most states have continued to rely heavily on local property taxes and to worry more about local control of schools than about equal educational opportunity.

A few states have been successful in equalizing their school funding formulas, particularly Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Kentucky, Montana, New Jersey, Texas, Washington, West Virginia,and Wyoming where the courts played a big role (La Morte, 1989). Two arguments persuaded these courts to act:
(a) despite reform efforts, significant inequalities in funding remained between rich and poor school districts, and (b) schools with many students from poor families needed extra funding to provide them with an adequate education.

School finance reformers in Texas used the first argument to seek greater equality among its local public schools. Reformers in New Jersey used the second argument to seek more adequate schools, particularly for disadvantaged students in poor, urban areas. The school-

finance reform efforts in Texas and New Jersey may suggest useful strategies for poor, urban school districts in other states.

Unequal Schools in Texas

The Courts: A Texas school-finance case, *San Antonio v. Rodriguez* (1973), was the first to reach the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court rejected the plaintiff's case for equalization and ruled that local control of schools was a sufficient rationale for allowing wide differences in funding. The Court also declined to apply the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution, reasoning that education is not a fundamental right defined in the Constitution. As a result, virtually all school finance suits since *Rodriguez* have been brought in state courts.

The Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) in San Antonio and its lead attorney, Albert H. Kauffman, continued efforts to reform Texas school finances with help from the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) and its director, Dr. José Cárdenas. They contended that the funding available to poor school districts with predominantly Mexican-American students was not equal to that available to rich school districts.

Finally, in *Edgewood v. Kirby* (1989) the Texas Supreme Court ruled that the Texas school financing system was unconstitutional because local district financing "showed a 700 to 1 ratio between value of taxable property in wealthiest and poorest districts and district spending per student varying from $2,112 to $19,333" (p. 391). The court said this violated the state constitutional provision requiring maintenance of an "efficient" system to achieve "general diffusion of knowledge." Many low-wealth school districts joined the suit as plaintiff intervenors and supported MALDEF's claim that the Texas school-finance system was unconstitutional.

The Legislature: The Texas court charged the state legislature with designing an "efficient" system that equalized the funding available to poor and rich school districts. After nearly two years of struggle, including four special sessions, the legislature passed and Gov. Ann Richards signed a school-finance law on April 15, 1991. It will equalize funding to local schools within 188 education regions corresponding roughly to the state's counties (*New York Times*, April 16, 1991).

The new system will eventually guarantee a minimum yield for local property-tax effort. Voters will decide their local tax effort above the required minimum of $1 per $100 of property value up to a maximum of

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$1.45 per $100 of property value. The first $1 will go into the equalization pot, the next $.40 will be shared between the equalization pot and the local district, and only the last $.05 will go entirely to the local district (Foster, 1991).

Like most tax legislation, the law is a compromise. High-wealth districts resisted any redistribution of revenue; MALDEF and IDRA pressed for completely equal redistribution. At the last moment, the low-wealth plaintiff intervenors supported the compromise. Only the threat that the courts might impose a system of their own design finally prompted the legislature to act.

The Result: Poor school districts will benefit from the new system because wealthy districts will have to share their revenues on a county-wide basis. Some urban school districts such as Houston, Dallas, and Austin have concentrations of poor, African-American families but also have significant commercial property wealth within their borders. These urban districts will have to share some of their revenues and hence may have to raise their property-tax rates to maintain the previous level of funding under the new system (Harp, 1991).

Urban districts with low property-wealth will clearly benefit, as will all low-wealth districts. The guaranteed minimum yield, equivalent to a tax base of $280,000 per student, will undoubtedly reduce the funding inequalities among Texas school districts. However, since the guarantee is an absolute rather than a relative formula, inflation will eventually erode the guarantee unless the legislature increases it. Unless the guaranteed yield is tied to the wealthy districts' increasing wealth, inequalities in funding will re-emerge.

Next to the strong leadership from the courts, the most striking feature of the Texas compromise was its support by a state-wide political coalition whose

common bond was low property-wealth. The coalition succeeded because it spoke for a majority that included urban as well as rural Mexican Americans, African American, and Anglo-Americans. Poor school districts in other states might also succeed with a such an economic coalition.

Neither the Texas Supreme Court's decision nor the legislature's response took into consideration the special challenge of providing adequate schools for the students from poor families who are trapped in the inner city. New Jersey faced that problem head on.

Inadequate Schools in New Jersey

The Courts: Like the Texas courts, the New Jersey courts focused on inequalities of funding at first. In 1973 the New Jersey Supreme Court decided *Robinson v. Cahill* (1973). The U.S. Supreme Court had just decided the *Rodriguez* decision, so the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution was no longer available as a rationale for equalizing school funding. Instead the New Jersey court based its decision on the education clause in its own state constitution which called for a "thorough and efficient" system of public education . The court ruled that this clause had been intended precisely to ensure equal financial support for local schools and went on to say that this support must be provided by the state when local school districts were unable or unwilling to provide it themselves (*Robinson v. Cahill*, 1973, p. 474).

During the long process of implementing the *Robinson* decision the focus broadened from equal funding inputs to include educational outcomes, i.e., to the question of whether the schools were providing an adequate education for poor students. The argument for adequate schools led to a stunning success on behalf of students in poor, urban schools by attorney Marilyn Morheuser and the Educational Law Center in Newark. On June 5, 1990, in the case of *Abbott v. Burke* (1990), the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled in favor of students in Camden, East Orange, Jersey City, and Irvington, representing 30 poor school districts in New Jersey who argued that their schools were inadequate. The court ordered that the state raise the level of funding of the 30 poorest districts to the average level of the 108 richest districts, but it explicitly left the fate of the districts in the middle undecided.

The court went beyond funding equality and explicitly applied the standard of educational adequacy that had first emerged in the implementation of *Robinson v. Cahill*. The court said that the record showed that the needs of students in poor, urban districts were greater than that of students in wealthier districts:

> It is clear to us that in order to achieve the constitutional standard for the student from these poorer urban districts—the ability to function in that society entered by their relatively advantaged peers—the totality of the districts' educational offering must contain elements over and above those found in the affluent suburban district. If the educational fare of the seriously disadvantaged student is the same as the 'regular education' given to the advantaged student, those serious disadvantages will not be addressed, and students in the poorer urban districts will simply not be able to compete. A thorough and efficient education requires such level of education as will enable all students to function as citizens and workers in the same society, and that necessarily means that in poorer urban districts something more must be added to the regular education in order to achieve the command of the Constitution. (*Abbott v. Burke*, p. 322).

Carol Ascher surveys other special funding needs of urban schools in "Urban School Finance: The Quest for Equal Educational Opportunity" (1989).

The Legislature: Soon after the *Abbott v. Burke* decision, newly elected Gov. James Florio persuaded the legislature to pass the Quality Education Act (Q.E.A.) and to increase the state sales tax and income tax to fund the allocation of about $1.1 billion in additional state aid to poor and lower-middle-class school districts (Newman, 1990). As in Texas, the wealthy school districts whose state revenues were cut were angry and challenged the governor politically and legally.

> A broad coalition of low-wealth districts produced a compromise that equalized all but the last nickel of property-tax revenue.

The Q.E.A. was not the product of a broad coalition as in Texas, and this had drastic consequences. In March 1991 the legislature diverted $350 million from school aid to property-tax relief, including $150 million from the new aid intended for the poorest urban districts. This reduced the Q.E.A. funding by almost one-third. Some school districts in the middle range of wealth which were supposed to receive additional state aid under Q.E.A. were left out of the equalization formula.

The Result: The 30 poor, urban districts will receive increased funding but not on the grand scale envisioned at first. The revised Q.E.A. placed budget-growth caps of between 7.5 percent and 9 percent on all but the 30 poor-

est, urban districts. This further alienated districts in the middle. The massive aid increases for the 30 urban districts were restricted to growth ranging from 9.7 to 22 percent (Weisman, 1991).

Implications for Other States

Urban districts may find the Texas and New Jersey experiences helpful as they formulate their strategies for seeking additional funding at the state level. An important factor is how the courts interpret the various education clauses in the state constitutions. Equality of funding for all school districts was the primary goal that emerged in Texas, where a broad coalition of low-wealth districts achieved a compromise that equalized all but the last nickel of local property-tax revenue.

Adequate funding for the 30 poorest urban school districts was the primary goal in New Jersey. Despite a ground-breaking court decision, the absence of a broad political coalition that included lower-middle-class school districts in New Jersey may have led to the success of the anti-tax movement in the fall elections and the skimming of nearly a third of the new school aid for property-tax relief.

In Texas the debate was confined to equalizing financial inputs and providing equal educational opportunity without scrutinizing the educational effects of this redistributed funding. In New Jersey the court considered both financial inputs and educational outcomes. It weighed the evidence of failure in urban schools and tried to set a standard for adequate education for the disadvantaged students attending them.

It might seem that New Jersey tried to do more for poor families whose children attend urban schools than Texas, but time will tell which state has built a more enduring legacy of equal opportunity. The court's focus on the 30 poorest urban districts and its neglect of the lower-middle-class districts who were not a party to the class action contributed to the failure to build a political coalition in New Jersey that included a majority of low-wealth districts . When the political opposition got tough, the New Jersey legislature retreated to compliance with the court's decision in *Abbott v. Burke*, but little more. However, the result will at least help children in these urban schools.

Both states offer valuable models to those who seek both *equal* and *adequate* educational opportunities for the children of poor families. Many urban school advocates such as Stan Karp, a high school teacher in Newark (1991), and Bruce Shapiro, a political journalist and member of the Initiative for Quality Urban Schools in New Haven, CT, believe that "the legal challenge to school finance inequity promises to be the great civil rights battleground of the 1990s, with the same explosive potential as *Brown v. Board of Education* a generation ago" (Shapiro, 1991, p. 653). However, the struggle is not won with a single victory in the courts. Ultimate success requires reaching beyond local precincts to build coalitions with other communities whose low wealth also prevents them from providing equal and adequate schools for their children. ❖

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Edgewood Indep. School Dist. v. Kirby, 777 S.W.2d 391 (Tex. 1989).

Robinson v. Cahill, 62 N.J. 473, 303 A.2d 273 (1973) and subsequent decisions through 1976.

San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez, 411 U.S. 1 (1973), *reversing* 337 F. Supp. 280 (1971).

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Recommended Resources on

Poverty and Schools

Growing Up Poor in Various Cultural Groups

Borman, Kathryn M., Elaine Meuninghoff, and Shirley Piazza. 1988. "Urban Appalachian Girls and Young Women: Bowing to No One." In *Class, Race, and Gender in American Education*, edited by Lois Weis, 230-248. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Descriptions of high school experiences of poor children from a cultural group that is often overlooked.

Fine, Michelle. 1991. *Framing Dropouts: Notes on the Politics of an Urban High School*. Albany: SUNY Press

Interviews with African-American and Hispanic young men and women and their parents. Analyzes the role of schools in pushing these students out.

Goldstein, Beth L. 1988. "In Search of Survival: The Education and Integration of Hmong Refugee Girls." *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 16 (Summer): 1-27.

Experiences of Hmong girls in a vocational high school in a Midwestern city.

Harrington, Michael. 1962. *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*. New York: Macmillan Company.

Classic study of the "culture of poverty" across age and ethnic groups. Often cited by proponents of Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty.

Kozol, Jonathan. 1988. *Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America*. New York: Crown Publishers.

A well known education writer focuses on the experiences of one family to show how race, gender, poverty, economic, and educational issues are often entangled.

Theory about Poverty

Danziger, Sheldon H., and Daniel H. Weinberg, eds. 1986. *Fighting Poverty: What Works and What Doesn't*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Essays by economists, sociologists, and social policy analysts on welfare, job creation, family structure, Chapter I programs, and related issues. Documents the complexity of evaluating the effectiveness of anti-poverty programs.

Sandefur, Gary D., and Marta Tienda, eds. 1988. *Divided Opportunities: Minorities, Poverty, and Social Policy*. New York: Plenum Press.

Anti-poverty programs have disparate effects on people from different cultural groups. Collected essays from a conference.

Wilson, William J. 1987. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

A controversial book focusing on male joblessness as the root of urban poverty; urges universal full employment with categorical programs as a short-term response to urban poverty.

Poor Children and Educational Policy

Committee for Economic Development (CED). 1991. *The Unfinished Agenda: A New Vision for Child Development and Education* and *Children in Need: Investment Strategies for the Educationally Disadvanataged*. Two separate volumes. New York and Washington, DC: CED.

Business leaders and educators spent nine years developing these strategies for improving the educational achievement of all children, particularly the disadvantaged.

Fordham, Signithia, and John U. Ogbu. 1986. "Black Students' School Success: Coping with the 'Burden of Acting White.'" *The Urban Review* 18 (3), 176-206.

Analyzes ethnographic data on how "fictive kinships" (collective identities) affect children's academic achievement.

Freire, Paulo. 1971. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos. New York: Herder and Herder.

A classic text on critical pedagogy. Urges teachers to focus on students' awareness of poverty and oppression.

Greer, Colin. 1972. *The Great School Legend: A Revisionist Interpretation of American Public Education*. New York: Basic Books.

Questions whether schools and education have indeed been the creators of upward mobility for past waves of immigrant and poor groups.

Luthar, Suniya S., and Zigler, Edward. 1991. "Vulnerability and Competence: A Review of Research on Resilience in Childhood." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 61 (January): 6-22.

Reviews numerous studies that examine attributes of poor children with multiple "at-risk factors" who become responsible functioning adults.

Oakes, Jeannie. 1985. *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Educators and students reveal how the vastly different goals in upper and lower track classes are mechanisms by which schools replicate social inequality.

Reed, Sally, and R. Craig Sautter. 1990. "Children of Poverty: The Status of Twelve Million Young Americans." Kappan Special Report. *Phi Delta Kappan* 71 (June): K-1 to K-12.

Good overview of the causes of poverty and the role of schools in finding coordinated, concerted solutions. Brief descriptions of model programs that mobilize parents and integrate community and health services into schools. Reprints available from PDK.

Yeakey, Carol Camp, and Clifford T. Bennett. 1990. "Race, Schooling, and Class in American Society." *Journal of Negro Education* 59 (Winter): 3-18.

Discusses the educational and economic marginality experienced by African Americans. Considers the implications of these and similar experiences for the schooling of African Americans, lower status whites, and other racial and ethnic groups.

More Model Programs and Practical Ideas

Comer, James P. 1988. "Educating Poor Minority Children." *Scientific American*, November, pp. 42-48.

A summary of what made the Yale/New Haven schools program so successful. A good example of how urban schools and parents can work together to raise achievement levels.

McLaughlin, M.W. 1989. "A Child Resource Policy: Moving Beyond Dependence on School and Family." In *Expanding the Role of the School: Elementary School Center Conferences, 1987-1989*, edited by Elementary School Center, 45-51. New York: Elementary School Center.

A critique of current efforts to address the needs of at-risk children. Argues for a broader perspective of "who children are and where they live and how they manage."

Schorr, Lisbeth B. 1989. *Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage*. New York: Anchor Books.

A synthesis of research and evaluation about programs that have been successful with at-risk children. Includes information about school-based programs.

Klopf, Gordon J., Allan Shedlin Jr., and Esther S. Zaret. 1988. "The School as Locus of Advocacy for all Children." An occasional paper available from the Elementary School Center, 2 East 103rd St., New York, NY 10029.

Proposes a new concept of schooling that designates the elementary school as advocate for children and their families.

Social Class Awareness for Educators

Walkerdine, Valerie. 1990. *Schoolgirl Fictions*. New York: Verso.

Self-awareness essays over a twenty-year period focusing on social class, gender, and education. Psychoanalytic approach.

Weiler, Kathleen. 1988. *Women Teaching for Change: Gender, Class, and Power*. South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey.

Interviews teachers working to promote students' awareness of social justice. Combines critical pedagogy and feminism.

Data about Poverty

Bureau of the Census. 1990. *Money Income and Poverty Status in the United States, 1989*. Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 168. Washington, DC: GPO.

Current data on the economic conditions of families and individuals in the U.S. by race and ethnicity.

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CDF Reports, the Children's Defense Fund newsletter, 122 C St., N.W., Suite 400, Washington, DC 20001; 212/628-8787.

A private, non-profit child advocacy group and a good source for current information on children in America. A free list of CDF materials is available upon request.

CDS, the Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students newsletter, The Johns Hopkins University, 3505 North Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218; 301/338-7570.

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